

The process for this project came very natural to me in regards to subject matter. The guidelines for this project were to create surreal/constructed images on any topic of our choosing. With a project with a very broad direction, I started looking around my room to find surreal inspiration within not only my own life but in everyone's life. After searching for possible items that I could base an entire project on, I narrowed my findings to three items that had a strong correlation with each other; wilted flowers, a gas mask, and a stack of toilet paper. I felt as though these were all very symbols of the COVID-19 pandemic, a surreal and harsh reality that has affected each and everyone's life. I feel as though my body of work attempts to take scenes from real life and heighten its emotions through the formal elements.

This piece has both strengths and weaknesses in regards to its use of formal elements. The first strong aspect of this project would be, in my opinion, would be the mask close up shot. This photo provides the emotions that I wanted to express with the public's fear and being partially in the dark about what's happening with COVID-19 and how we will get back the way everything was. One weakness that I see within this series would be the use of wilting flowers. While this image is consistent with high contrast of light and shadow alongside its use of texture, the negative space is vast and almost overwhelming. The frame of the toilet paper provides an excellent display of the formal element of shape and texture. The rigid yet soft lines allow your eye to follow the compositions shape seamlessly. The gas mask side profile silhouette has a very harsh yet soft transition between the foreground and background allowing the hue of the background seep onto the subject of the photograph. Finally, the image of the mask laying across a worrisome primate uses texture within the mask, line within the sketching, and form through the combination of the two components of the photo.

I chose to use this project as a forum to display the internal struggles of being in quarantine during the pandemic. These photos display the stark emotions brought into each and everyone of our lives through isolation within the past year. This pandemic has broken connections with families, friends, schools, and jobs, and I wanted to display the raw tension of fear that has shrouded our lives for the past year. These photos are my way visually expressing death, fear, reflection, and reality in regards to the COVID-19 Pandemic. The photographer *Man Ray's* work caught my attention in both subject matter and composition. His work provided me with inspiration in technical aspects such as contrasting light and shadow, simple yet vivid visuals, and emotionally charged concepts. I tried to emulate Man Ray's photography style in trying to capture a sense of emotional intensity. I wanted to capture his sense of frozen emotion through both facial expression and symbolic nature.